

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the pending application is respectfully requested on the basis of the following particulars:

In the claims

Claim 1 is amended to more clearly describe the present invention. Claim 1 is amended to clarify that the plate is mounted completely within an open cylindrical inner part of the nut. Support for this amendment is found at line 21 of page 2, line 15 of page 4, and Figs. 2 and 3.

Claim 1 is also amended to clarify that the two lateral clearances are configured and dimensioned to receive the two pins of the auxiliary tool when the lateral branches of the fixing head are engaged in the lateral clearances.

Rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 1 presently stands rejected as being unpatentable over Byrd (U.S. 5,466,237) in view of Blackburn (U.S. 2,108,957). This rejection is respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

It is respectfully submitted that Byrd and Blackburn, either individually or in any combination, fail to disclose or suggest all of the elements of claim 1.

In particular, these references fail to disclose or suggest a nut comprising a plate mounted completely within an open cylindrical inner part of the nut, the plate being in free rotation in and extending diametrically across the open cylindrical inner part.

The examiner recognizes that "Byrd fails to disclose the device wherein the threaded nut further includes a plate mounted in free rotation in the bore of the threaded nut wherein the width of the plate defines two lateral clearances capable of allowing the branches of a fixture [to] pass through." (page 2 of the Office action).

Applicant respectfully submits that while Byrd does not disclose or suggest a plate mounted in free rotation in the bore of a nut at all, Blackburn fails to disclose or suggest a plate mounted completely within an open cylindrical inner part (bore) of the nut.

Blackburn discloses a cupped washer or bearing element 16 rotatably mounted over a boss 15, formed around an inner face of the nut. (see *Blackburn*; 1st col. of page 2, lines 45-50). However, referring especially to Blackburn's Figs. 2, 3, and 6, it can be seen that this washer 16 is not mounted within the bore of nut 13, but as Blackburn explains, is mounted over the boss 15, which is external to the bore of the nut 13.

Therefore, Byrd and Blackburn together fail to disclose or suggest a nut comprising a plate mounted completely within an open cylindrical inner part of the nut, the plate being in free rotation in and extending diametrically across the open cylindrical inner part.

Further, it is respectfully submitted that the references together fail to disclose or suggest two lateral clearances configured and dimensioned to receive, when the lateral branches of the fixing head are engaged in said lateral clearances, two pins of an auxiliary tool for gripping the nut in order to facilitate assembly of the nut on the fixing head.

As the examiner has recognized, Byrd does not disclose or suggest the plate mounted in free rotation in, and extending diametrically across, an open cylindrical inner part of the nut. Accordingly, Byrd cannot disclose or suggest that two lateral clearances are defined on either side of such a plate in order to allow passage of the branches of the fixing head inside the nut, and Byrd further cannot disclose or suggest that the two lateral clearances are configured to permit the insertion of two pins of an auxiliary tool for gripping the nut in order to facilitate assembly of the nut on the fixing head.

Blackburn also fails to disclose or suggest that two lateral clearances are defined on either side of such a plate in order to allow passage of the branches of the fixing head inside the nut, *and* that the two lateral clearances are configured and dimensioned to receive, *when the lateral branches of the fixing head are engaged in the lateral*

clearances, two pins of an auxiliary tool for gripping the nut in order to facilitate assembly of the nut on the fixing head.

Construing, *arguendo*, Blackburn's washer 16 and the rib 18 and brace 19 to correspond to the claimed plate, there is no teaching or suggestion of two lateral clearances configured to permit the insertion of two pins of an auxiliary tool for gripping the nut in order to facilitate assembly of the nut on the fixing head, in addition to allowing passage of the branches of the fixing head inside the nut.

On the contrary, referring to Blackburn's Figs. 5 and 10, it can be seen that the legs 2 and 3 of the keeper lug 1 entirely fill the spaces on either side of the rib 18 of the washer 16. There is no space provided for the insertion of any pins of an auxiliary tool for gripping the nut in order to facilitate assembly of the nut onto the keeper lug 1.

Therefore, Blackburn cannot be construed to meet both of the elements of claim 1, wherein the two lateral clearances accommodate, inside the nut together, both the branches of the fixing head *and* two pins of an auxiliary tool for gripping the nut.

Not only does Blackburn not disclose or suggest that any lateral clearance is configured to accommodate two pins of an auxiliary tool along with the branches of the fixing head, Blackburn does not disclose or suggest any such auxiliary tool at all, or any type of specialized tool for tightening the nut 13 onto the keeper lug 1.

Therefore, Blackburn lacks any teaching at all that would lead a person of ordinary skill in the art to the presently claimed invention.

For at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that Byrd and Blackburn fail to form a prima facie case of obviousness of the presently claimed invention. Therefore claims 1 and 3-6 are allowable over the cited references, and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Conclusion

In view of the amendments to the claims, and in further view of the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance.

Accordingly, it is requested that claims 1 and 3-6 be allowed and the application be passed to issue.

If any issues remain that may be resolved by a telephone or facsimile communication with the Applicant's attorney, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the numbers shown.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John R. Schaefer', written in a cursive style.

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